constructive dialogue with Bangladesh on the subject.

NEW DELHI
8 October 93.

Discussion with Permanent Under Secretary of British commonwealth

4605. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether during a meeting between Mr. David Gillmore, Permanent Under Secretary of British Commonwealth and Foreign Office and the Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. V. K. Grower on 2nd February, 1994, the former expressed appreciation for steps taken by India for greater transparency on human rights issue including providing increased access to outsiders; and

(b) if so, what other issues were discussed during the meet and the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Other issues discussed during the meeting included exchanges of high-level visits during 1994, Indo-UK economic relations, bilateral cooperation in the areas of terrorism and drug-trafficking, the situation in J&K and Indo-Pak issues. The objective of regular Foreign Office consultations with the UK is to enhance understanding of each other's concerns and give impetus to bilateral relations, which was achieved during the talks.

Chinese Naval activities in the Indian Ocean

4606. Shri G. PRATHAPA REDDY :
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether China is making preparation for setting up Naval bases in the Indian Ocean ;

(b) whether India has noted the promoting Naval activities by China in the Indian Ocean; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) Government is aware of unverified press reports to this effect.

(b) and (c) The Chinese Government, with whom this matter has been discussed, has dismissed these reports as exaggerated. Government keep under constant review all developments having a bearing on the country's security and take appropriate measures to safeguard the national interest.

US President's letter to Indian Government

4607. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the U.S. President has written any letter to the Indian Government recently ;

(b) if so, what are the contents of the letter and the reaction of Government thereto ;

(c) whether Government have lodged any protest to U.S. Government for its interference in India's internal matters including CIA assistance to ISI in Pakistan against India ; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In a letter to Prime Minister, President Clinton stated that he looks forward to meeting PM in person to review the global and bilateral issues with the goal of advancing US-Indian relations and promoting understandig and friendship between our two people. The US President said Deputy Secretary Talbott's visit to India underscores the importance the US placed on the region. President Clinton has also expressed his deepest sympathy and sincere condolences on the death of two Indian soldiers in Somalia last month.

In his response, Prime Minister stated that he looked forward to his conversation

with President Clinton on the many matters of common interest and concern, Government had been glad of the opportunity for exchanging views with Mr. Talbott on matters of mutual interest, in particular on building up Indo-US bilateral relations, Prime Minister also expressed appreciation for President Clinton's sympathy on the death of two Indian soldiers in Somalia and for the sentiments expressed by the US President on India's endeavour to contribute the restoration of peace in Somalia.

(c) and (d) Government have repeatedly emphasized that there has been no change in the extent of support being provided by Pakistan to terrorism in India in the form of arms, equipment and training facilities and the infiltration of mercenaries. This was corroborated by available evidence. The US Government have stated that the US will continue to press Pakistan to cease aiding and abetting terrorism in India, but have also conveyed that, according to their impression, official Pakistani support to terrorism in India has declined. Government continue to impress upon all friendly Governments, including the US, the factual situation relating to Pakistani involvement in promoting terrorism in India.

Deployment of more troops in Somalia

4608. SHRI K. R. MALKANI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the U.N. want us to send 2,000 more troops in addition to the 5,000 which are already there in Somalia ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that U.S.A. and European countries have withdrawn the bulk of their forces from Somalia ; and

(c) if so, would Government explain why we have committed forces in Somalia when we have no vital national interest in that country and when Somalia had never asked either for our troops or for any other foreign country's troops ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As part of our traditional policy of supporting and participating in UN Peace keeping Operations, India joined the International effort to create at secure environment for providing humanitarian relief to the people of Somalia where there is no recognised Government. The presence of our contingent has received appreciation from the Somali people.

PM's Visit to UK

4609. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA :
SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Prime Minister had recently visited U.K. ;

(b) if so, the details of the visit together with the nature of discussions held ; and

(c) whether the issue of economic investments in India also cropped up during the talks and if so, with what results ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Prime Minister paid an official visit to the UK from 13-16 March 1994 at the invitation of the British PM Mr. John Major. During the visit ,the Prime Minister called on the Queen, held talks with Mr. John Major and received the UK's Defence Secretary, Minister for Overseas Development and the President of the Board of Trade. He also met the leaders of the British Opposition Parties. The main issues covered during PM's talks with Mr. Major and members of the British Cabinet included intensification of bilateral economic relations. Indo/UK cooperation in various fields, regional issues related to Europe and South Asia, the situation in J&K and Indo-Pak relations.